

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) An implant comprising an elongated member having a pair of ends and an outer surface wherein one of said pair of ends includes a thin elongated lip [having] which protrudes beyond the outer surface of the elongated member and is located approximately 300 degrees or less of the periphery of the elongated member leaving a posterior surface free from protruding into or from contacting with or abrading a surface of the eye including the cornea or conjunctiva, said thin elongated lip being located on said elongated member to position the thin elongated lip in a generally anterior direction upon insertion in to a punctum opening to position the posterior surface away from a surface of an eye, said elongated member being formed of a dimension to pass through a punctum opening of an eye.

5. (Amended) An implant comprising an elongated member having a pair of ends and an outer surface wherein one of said pair of ends includes [a] an external retaining member [having] which protrudes beyond the outer surface of the elongated member and is located approximately 300 degrees or less of the periphery of the elongated member leaving a posterior surface free from protruding into or from contacting with or abrading a surface of the eye including the cornea or conjunctiva and wherein said elongated member has a portion curved anteriorly relative to said external retaining member, said external retaining member being located on said elongated member to be positioned adjacent to said curved portion and in a generally anterior direction upon insertion into a punctum opening to position the posterior surface away from a surface of

an eye, said elongated member being formed of a dimension to pass through a punctum opening of an eye.

6. (Twice Amended) An implant comprising an elongated member having a pair of ends and an outer surface wherein one of said pair of ends includes a collapsible flared section having an outer surface and the other of said pair of ends includes a thin elongated lip [having] which protrudes beyond the outer surface of the elongated member and is located approximately 300 degrees or less of the periphery of the elongated member leaving a posterior surface free from protruding into or from contacting with or abrading a surface of the eye including the cornea or conjunctiva and wherein said elongated member is shaped to position the posterior surface away from a surface of an eye, said elongated member and said collapsible flared section being formed of a dimension to pass through a punctum opening of an eye.

12. (Twice Amended) A punctum plug comprising an elongated central member having a central axis and a pair of ends and an outer surface wherein one of said pair of ends includes means defining a collapsible flared section terminating in a starting tip which is capable of dilating a punctum opening by urging [the] the punctum opening into a substantially oval shape and wherein said collapsible flared section is capable of being collapsed relative to said central axis in response to the application of force on the collapsible flared section in a direction to collapse the collapsible flared section and the other of said pair of ends includes a thin lip [having] which protrudes beyond the outer surface of the elongated member and is located approximately 300 degrees or less of the periphery of the

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elongated member leaving a posterior surface free from protruding into or from contacting with or abrading a surface of the eye including the cornea or conjunctiva and wherein said elongated central member is shaped to position the posterior surface away from a surface of an eye, said elongated central member and said collapsible flared section being formed of a dimension to pass through a punctum of an eye. ▶

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18. (Twice Amended) An implant comprising an elongated member having a pair of ends and an outer surface wherein one of said pair of ends includes a shaped distal tip forming a starting tip having an outer surface and the other of said pair of ends includes a thin elongated lip [having] which protrudes beyond the outer surface of the elongated member and is located approximately 300 degrees or less of the periphery of the elongated member leaving a posterior surface free from protruding into or from contacting with or abrading a surface of the eye including the cornea or conjunctiva, said thin elongated lip being located on said elongated member to position the thin elongated lip in a generally anterior direction upon insertion into a punctum opening to position the posterior surface away from a surface of an eye, said elongated member and said shaped distal tip being formed of a dimension to pass through a punctum opening of an eye. ▶

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20. (Amended) An implant comprising an elongated member having a pair of ends wherein one of said pair of ends terminates in a tip insertion section having a distal starting tip having a cross-sectional dimension that penetrates a punctal opening defined by a fibrous tissue and wherein said distal starting tip has a selected length to pass through the punctal opening to enable the tip insertion section

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to gently expand [to a generally oval shape] the sphincter muscle defining the punctum opening into a generally oval shape.

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29. (Twice Amended) An implant adapted to be inserted into the punctum opening of an eye [and be transported into the horizontal portion of the canaliculus including the horizontal sac] to occlude the punctum opening, said implant comprising an elongated member having a first end and a spaced, opposed second end and a central member having a predetermined cross-sectional dimension extending from said first end to said second end;

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said first end having a starting tip including a tip insert section having predetermined cross-sectional dimension and wherein the tip insert section has an offset distal starting tip which is smaller in cross-sectional dimension than said tip insert section; and

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said second end including a thin elongated lip which is located on said elongated member and which protrudes beyond the outer surface of the elongated member and is located approximately 300 degrees or less of the periphery of the elongated member leaving a posterior surface free from protruding into or from contacting with or abrading a surface of the eye including the cornea or conjunctiva to position the thin elongated lip in a generally anterior direction upon insertion in to a punctum opening and which is adapted to engage the punctum opening.

31. (Twice Amended) A method for treating an external eye condition due to a deficiency of tears including the steps of testing the eye to determine if a tear deficiency exists; and

if a tear deficiency is determined to exist, inserting into the punctum opening an implant having an elongated central member and a pair of ends and an outer surface wherein one end of said pair of ends has a starting tip and wherein said starting tip includes a tip insert section having predetermined cross-sectional dimension and has an offset distal starting tip which is smaller in cross-sectional dimension than said tip insert section and the other of said pair of ends has a thin elongated lip being located on said elongated member which protrudes beyond the outer surface of the elongated member and is located approximately 300 degrees or less of the periphery of the elongated member leaving a posterior surface free from protruding into or from contacting with or abrading a surface of the eye including the cornea or conjunctiva to position the thin elongated lip in a generally anterior direction upon insertion into a punctum opening wherein the starting tip dilates and passes through the punctum opening and into the canaliculi interior of an eye to occlude the punctum opening and the vertical portion of the canaliculus.

33. (Amended) A punctum plug comprising

an elongated central member having a central axis and a pair of ends wherein one of said pair of ends includes an enlarged collapsible annular shaped section terminating in a starting tip wherein said starting tip [inserted] is inserted into [a punctual opening and urges the punctual opening into a dilated punctual opening capable of] and dilates the punctal opening for receiving

[and being further dilated by said enlarged annular shaped section in response to the application of force on the elongated central member in a direction to urge the] and passing said enlarged annular shaped section through the dilated punctual opening, said elongated central member and said enlarged annular shaped section being formed of a dimension to pass through a punctual of an eye, and wherein the other of said pair of ends has a lip for engaging the punctum opening and positioning said enlarged annular shaped section in a canaliculus adjacent a punctual of an eye.

34. (Amended) The punctum plug of claim [32] 33 wherein said opening and the other of said pair of ends includes an external retaining member.

35. (Amended) The punctum plug of claim [32] 33 wherein said enlarged annular shaped section is in the form of a relatively rigid flared section.

36. (Amended) The punctum plug of claim [32] 33 wherein said enlarged annular shaped section is in the form of a conical shaped flared section.

37. (Amended) The punctum plug of claim [32] 33 wherein said enlarged annular shaped section is conical shaped having a rounded outer edge to facilitate passage of said enlarged annular shaped section through the dilated punctum opening.

38. (Amended) The punctum plug of claim [32] 33 wherein said enlarged annular shaped section has one side which has a greater [slop] slope towards said starting tip.

Please add new claims 39 through 43.

39. An implant comprising
an elongated member having a pair of ends wherein one of
said pair of ends includes a shaped distal tip forming a starting
tip having an outer surface and the other of said pair of ends
includes a thin elongated lip having a posterior surface and
wherein said shaped distal tip is in the form of a collapsible
flared section located between the starting tip and said thin
elongated lip, said thin elongated lip being located on said
elongated member to position the thin elongated lip in a
generally anterior direction upon insertion in to a punctum
opening to position the posterior surface away from a surface of
an eye, said elongated member and said shaped distal tip being
formed of a dimension to pass through a punctum opening of an
eye.

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40. An implant adapted to be inserted into the punctum
opening of an eye to occlude the punctum opening, said implant
comprising

an elongated member having a first end and a spaced, opposed
second end and a central member having a predetermined cross-
sectional dimension extending from said first end to said second
end;

said first end having a starting tip including a tip insert
section having predetermined cross-sectional dimension and
wherein the tip insert section has an offset distal starting tip
which is smaller in cross-sectional dimension than said tip
insert section; and

said second end including a thin elongated lip which is
located on said elongated member to position the thin elongated
lip in a generally anterior direction upon insertion in to a
punctum opening and which is adapted to engage the punctum

opening, said elongated member having a slightly angular curve in a selected direction causing the second end to be slightly deflected relative to the first end for urging the thin elongated lip into holding engagement with the punctum opening.

41. A punctum plug comprising

an elongated central member having a central axis and a pair of ends wherein one of said pair of ends includes an enlarged annular shaped section terminating in a starting tip and has one side which has a greater slope towards said starting tip and wherein said starting tip is inserted into and dilates the punctal opening for receiving and passing said enlarged annular shaped section through the dilated punctal opening, said elongated central member and said enlarged annular shaped section being formed of a dimension to pass through a punctal of an eye.

42. A lacrimal occluder comprising

an elongated member having a pair of ends wherein one of said pair of ends terminates in a tip insertion section in the form of a collapsible flared section and having a distal starting tip having a cross-sectional dimension that penetrates a punctal opening defined by a fibrous tissue and wherein said distal starting tip has a selected length to pass through the punctal opening to enable the tip insertion section to gently expand the sphincter muscle defining the punctum opening to a dimension and shape sufficient for passing the tip insertion section.

43. The lacrimal occluder of claim 42 wherein said collapsible flared section is conical shaped.